

**TOWN OF WELLESLEY
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2014, 7:30 PM
Planning Office, Town Hall**

Attending: Heidi Gross, Chair; Stephen Murphy, Vice Chair; Joan Gaughan; Lise Olney; Raina McManus; Brandon Schmitt; Janet Hartke Bowser

Guests: John Rockwood, EcoTec, Inc.; Wendy and Thomas Engels, 9 Clovelly Road; Elizabeth Shaw, 14 Caroline Street; Timothy Kish, 49 Clovelly Road; Meghan and Stephen Breur, 29 Abbott Road; Liz Roman Gallese, 25 Caroline Street.

Public Voice

Tom and Wendy Engels attended the meeting to voice their continued concerns regarding the presence of two (2) 10 foot Silver Maple tree trunks located near Caroline Street in Fuller Brook Park. The Engels previously attended the NRC's September 9, 2014 meeting to voice their concerns. The trees remain in place since the NRC is considering a possible tree art project involving the carving of a whimsical seat in each of the trunks that would provide an atheistic interest in the park and a useable function to the trees. Ms. Gross indicated that the idea for this project came from a resident who is a landscape architect and that the NRC has recently formed a subcommittee to recommend a policy for evaluating the installation of art in Fuller Brook Park. Ms. Gross confirmed that no public funds would be used for this project and all costs would come from private fundraising after it is further reviewed under the new policy and public feedback is sought.

Mr. and Ms. Engels stated that they would like to see the tree trunks removed since they feel the trunks are eyesores. The Engels recently sent out an email message to neighbors requesting feedback on the trunks and the responses were distributed to all NRC members. Mr. Engels stated that they are not opposed to art in the park, but are just opposed to the proposed tree stump art and wanted to confirm that there would be a public hearing and consensus on the proposal before the project moved forward. Ms. Engels thanked the NRC for their efforts on the art subcommittee, and recommended that any art installation review process include input from artists and neighbors. She stated that it appears that there is no groundswell of support for the tree stump art and that the park and any type of art should remain natural and that the neighborhood would like input on the type of art installed in the park.

Elizabeth Shaw of 14 Caroline Street appreciated receiving park project updates and stated that she opposes using the tree stumps as art and feels that the trunks should be removed and that only art that is natural is appropriate for the park and that the community should be involved in choosing the art. Ms. Gross stated that the NRC had no intention of moving forward with the stump art proposal without first asking for neighborhood feedback and that there is no formal

proposal at this point. Ms. Gross recommends that if the stumps are to be removed that it is only when the wood is ready to be used for another purpose since Silver Maple wood needs to be properly dried and is very valuable. Ms. Gross stated that the DPW will not store the trunks, and that she needs time to locate someone who will be able to properly store the trunks. Mr. Engels asked if the NRC can agree that if there are no takers for the wood then the NRC would vote on their removal at the December 18th meeting, to which the board agreed.

Timothy Kish from 49 Clovelly Road would like to see the trunks removed, but stated that he would support some art in the park. Stephen and Meghan Breuer from 29 Abbott Road supported the removal of the trunks. Liz Roman Gallese from 25 Caroline Street felt that the trunk art proposal is out of sync with the natural character of the park would like them removed. She stated that she was gratified that the NRC is looking for a constructive solution and use for the wood.

Ms. Olney confirmed that the NRC's art in the park subcommittee is currently in the process of developing a policy for art in the park and will be making recommendations to the NRC at an upcoming meeting. She stated that the Art subcommittee met today and will make a series of recommendations for the NRC to consider at its next meeting, which will include seeking input from neighbors and the community regarding the proposed art work.

Mr. Engels asked what the process is for the NRC to adopt a new policy such and whether or not Town Meeting needs to approve it. Ms. Gross stated that the NRC has statutory authority to issue policies such as this that affect natural resources and land management under its jurisdiction and that only the NRC's approval is required.

The NRC thanked those in the audience for attending and stated that the Commission will further discuss the draft "Art in Fuller Brook Park" policy recommendations at the NRC's next meeting on December 4th.

NRC Review/Approval of Proposed Encroachment Correction and Remediation Plan on Town of Wellesley Land in Needham Adjacent to 62 Brookside Rd. and Approval of NRC Integrated Pest Management Policy Waiver Request

John Rockwood, a wetland scientist from EcoTec, attended the meeting to discuss this proposed Encroachment Correction and Remediation Plan on Town of Wellesley Land in Needham adjacent to 62 Brookside Road. As previously discussed at the NRC's September 9, 2014 and October 2, 2014 meetings, the Needham Conservation Commission recently confirmed that the owner of this property, Gordon Russell, cut down trees and mowed land in a wetlands resource area and buffer zone without a permit. Mr. Rockwood stated that a Notice of Intent (NOI) was filed by EcoTec, Inc. with the Needham Conservation Commission on behalf of Mr. Russell to address the encroachment and unpermitted tree removal activities. During survey activities, it was determined that tree removal activities also occurred on a small portion of the approx. 65 acres known as Rosemary Meadow, a Needham parcel owned by the Town of Wellesley and that approx. 1.4 acres of this area was encroached upon and is the subject of the mitigation/remediation plan. The NRC shares dual jurisdiction over this parcel with the Wellesley Board of Public Works. Following a site visit with the Needham Conservation

Commission, the NRC agreed that it would be best if the work proposed under the NOI for Needham DEP File #234-0722 and subsequent Order of Conditions should also address any work proposed to be conducted by Mr. Russell on the Town of Wellesley BPW/NRC property. While the Needham Conservation Commission has wetlands jurisdiction over this land in Needham and is proceeding with review of a Notice of Intent that includes a remediation plan, the NRC and Board of Public Works need to review and approve the plan for the Wellesley-owned land.

The NRC reviewed the submitted mitigation/remediation plan, proposed conditions plan and the revised site plan prepared by Mr. Rockwood that included the following proposed encroachment correction and remediation work on Town of Wellesley Property:

- Wood chip piles have been removed and areas have been seeded and sprayed with tackifier and will be reseeded as necessary.
- Metal debris to be carefully removed (including old metals drums that were sampled along with soils with no contamination detected).
- Tree stand and climbing pegs to be carefully removed.
- Tree house and associated debris to be carefully removed.
- Relocate the existing cut pine logs on east facing slope as habitat.
- Treat and remove honeysuckle from 1,200± square foot Wellesley mitigation area (identified as areas WA1 on site plan).
- Treat and remove invasive species, as needed, from four 200± square foot Wellesley shrub thickets (identified as areas WT1, WT2, WT3, and WT4 on the site plan).
- 1,200± square foot Wellesley mitigation area to be planted per planting plan specifications.
- Four 200± square foot Wellesley shrub thickets to be planted per planting plan specifications.
- Meadow to be cut two to three times per year for habitat and invasive species control to limit shown on Site Plan. Wellesley mitigation area will not be cut.
- Oriental bittersweet vines in trees within Limit of Work to be cut, treated, and removed.
- Woody invasive species in mitigation area and thickets to be treated or pulled.
- On-going tree maintenance with permission and notice.
- Mitigation areas to be monitored for two years with 75% survival rate required for new plant material.
- 4 property bounds will be installed along Wellesley and Gordon property boundary markers and two on Gordon property to mark mitigation area limits

Ms. Bowser stated that as part of this proposal, the NRC needs to review and approve an emergency waiver under its IPM Policy for the one-time application of a glyphosate-based herbicide to address the invasive honeysuckle thicket and oriental bittersweet vines in the trees as shown on the proposed plan. Mr. Rockwood stated that these invasives are well established on the property and that organic treatment methods are not effective in eliminating the invasives in the initial treatment application. He stated that work will be conducted by an insured and Licensed Pesticide (herbicide) Applicator using a cut and wipe or blot method. Spraying or foliar application of herbicides is not proposed on the Town of Wellesley land in Needham. He stated that removal and treatment of all other invasives on the property will be by mechanical means involving periodic mowing of the meadows as shown on the proposed plan.

After further discussion, a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the following three (3) motions related to this encroachment correction and remediation plan:

1. That the Wellesley NRC approve the work proposed to be conducted by Mr. Gordon Russell of 62 Brookside Road, Wellesley on a portion of the Town of Wellesley owned land at 0 Rosemary Meadow, Needham (Needham Assessor's Map 310, Block 1, Lot 0) as described in the 'Revised Site Report to Supplement Notice of Intent, Property Utilization and Management Plan and Mitigation Plan, 62 Brookside Road, ' prepared by EcoTec, Inc., dated November 17, 2014 and shown on the 'Conservation Commission Proposed Conditions Plan, 62 Brookside Road and 0 Rosemary Meadow, Wellesley, MA,' prepared by Field Resources Inc., dated August 20, 2014, revised November 18, 2014. This work, which will be subject to an Order of Conditions to be issued by the Needham Conservation Commission, includes removal of wood chip piles and seeding of exposed soil areas with a seed mix (already completed); removal of man-made materials including a tree stand, tree house and associated debris, and other metal debris; installation of stone or concrete markers along property boundary; relocation of several pine logs; mitigation planting areas including eighty shrubs; invasive species removal including removal of a honeysuckle thicket and removal of oriental bittersweet vines from trees; cutting of the meadow (two to three times annually); and on-going tree maintenance with specific advance permission, is intended to provide mitigation for tree removal work conducted on this property by Mr. Gordon, and augment and maintain the meadow and open understory forested habitat features on the portion of the Town of Wellesley land in Needham shown within the Limit of Work line of the above-referenced plan.
2. That the Wellesley NRC allow a one-time treatment with glyphosate-based herbicide to address the honeysuckle thicket and oriental bittersweet vines in the trees within the Limit of Work within the Town of Needham on the above-referenced plan. This work will be conducted by an insured and Licensed Pesticide (herbicide) Applicator using a cut and wipe or blot method. Spraying or foliar application of herbicides is not proposed on the Town of Wellesley land in Needham. The NRC approved this work as a one-time emergency waiver under its IPM policy.
3. That the Wellesley NRC provide a recommendation to the Wellesley DPW, the listed owner of the subject parcel, to sign an authorization letter to allow the revised Notice of Intent materials to be submitted to the Needham Conservation Commission for its review and anticipated approval under an Order of Conditions and to allow the proposed work to be conducted in accordance with the above-referenced Site Report and Proposed Conditions Plan, and the Order of Conditions to be issued by the Needham Conservation Commission.

Documents Reviewed for this Discussion:

- Revised Draft FY16 – FY20 Capital Budget Request and Worksheets

Based on the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee Chair, Barbara McMahon, three (3) NRC capital project funding requests have been moved into FY16 from out years since the CPC doesn't have many projects for FY16 and she requested that NRC consider adding additional projects for possible CPA funding in FY16. The NRC discussed moving the following three projects to FY16 Capital Budget Request from out years:

1. Comprehensive Town-Wide Pond Management Plan - \$100,000 for FY16 (CPA short form to be submitted for this project);
2. Morses Pond Shore Line Erosion Study - \$20,000 (CPA short form to be submitted for this project); and
3. Kelly Field Tennis Court Land Use and Needs Assessment Study for \$2,500 (CPA short form to be submitted for this project).

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the revised FY16 and 5-year Capital Plan and submit CPA funding requests for the three projects identified above and revoke the previous November 6, 2014 vote on the capital budget.

The NRC reviewed the draft capital budget cover letter to be submitted to the Advisory Committee and Ms. Olney and Ms. McManus had a number of recommended revisions.

New Business/Continuing Business/Liaison Reports

Discussion Re: Hunnewell Athletic Field Light Abatement Project Options

As previously discussed by the NRC, there have been neighborhood concerns over the years regarding off-site light spillage from the Hunnewell Multi-Purpose Fields and tennis courts. In response to these concerns, the NRC is requesting \$5,000 in its FY16 capital budget request to have the Town's lighting contractor at this location, Musco Lighting, evaluate options to reduce off-site light spillage and issues. Mr. Schmitt reviewed with the NRC a memo he drafted regarding this budget request outlining abatement costs and options including: repositioning the lights; adding new light shielding; adding new lights; and/or adding timers and user controls.

Request by Trails Committee to Move Fence at Hunnewell Field to Accommodate Trail System

Ms. Gaughan updated the NRC on recent activities of the Trails Committee and requested the NRC's approval to move the chain link fence located between the Hunnewell Field basketball courts and the adjacent baseball field back 10 feet to the north in order to provide for a safer pedestrian trail in this location. Ms. Gaughan stated that High School Athletic Director John Brown supports this request and that the funding source for the fence relocation has not yet been determined. **After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the fence relocation as requested.**

NRC Meeting Distribution of Information

Ms. Olney requested that NRC meeting documents be compiled and identified in a meeting “table of contents” in order for members to better track and review distributed meeting materials.

Traffic Island at Intersection of Wellesley Ave. and Route 16

Ms. Olney stated that several residents have voiced concerns to her about the unsightly condition of this traffic island, which has been paved with asphalt by the DPW after vehicles routinely ran over it destroying the flower beds in the island. Ms. Olney inquired if the island could have a natural material and planted with native, low maintenance vegetation or if the surface could be porous. She wanted to convey the NRC’s concern about stormwater runoff and management, and how this type of project contributes to town-wide loss of permeable surface.

Director’s Report

Update on Public Tree Planting Program

The NRC continued their discussion regarding the current NRC/DPW public shade tree removal and replacement policy whereby new trees are planted by the Town on private property behind the Town’s Right-of-Way. Previously, some members voiced concerns about the Town’s ability to protect these trees and questioned the survival rate of the trees planted by the Town.

Mr. Schmitt stated that he recently discussed the tree survivability rate of the Tree Planting Program with Mr. Warren from the DPW, who indicated that the DPW keeps a complete inventory of all Town tree plantings from 2001 to the present and reviews the condition of all trees for two years after planting to track the tree’s condition. Mr. Warren stated that approximately 80% of the trees planted behind the right-of-way by the Town on private land survive and are well cared for and he felt that there is no need to change the program. Ms. McManus asked if there was a way to better protect the trees that the Town plants on private property and Ms. Gross stated that the property owners must sign an agreement to water for 2 years any tree planted by the Town and to care for it for 5 years and the tree remains protected as the Town’s property during that time period.

Update on State Street Parking Lot – Pedestrian Trail Improvement and Mitigation Measures

Mr. Schmitt briefly reviewed with the NRC an email sent to Trails Committee members dated November 12, 2014 regarding a conflict with parked cars encroaching on the narrow section of the Fuller Brook Park path along the State Street parking lot just west of the football field. The Trails Committee was asked to review the memo and report back to the NRC on how they would like to proceed. Mr. Schmitt stated that there are currently 19 total parking spaces along the trail and that he discussed the following options with Mike Quinn from the DPW: installation of Concrete/Cement/Rubber Parking Bumpers; installation of wooden fencing; and installation of small reflective delineator posts. DPW staff had made it clear that they do not want bumpers due to interference with snow removal. The NRC briefly discussed whether or not to wait until after the park restoration project has been completed to address this matter, or to discuss with the DPW the possibility of including it during the park construction work, but will await recommendation from the Trails committee on the final treatment proposal. Options were sent to

the Trails committee for review and Mr. Schmitt will keep the NRC updated on the status of this matter.

NRC FY15 Work Plan

The NRC reviewed the draft FY15 Work Plan outlining current and capital carry-over projects and budgets as prepared by Ms. Bowser. The NRC will continue their review of the work plan including a discussion on setting priorities at its next meeting.

NRC Administrative Procedures

Mr. Schmitt inquired if the NRC would like to continue approving the voucher expense reports or only approve those expenses over a specific dollar amount. He stated that the Finance Dept. does not require that boards approve the voucher expense reports. Ms. McManus stated that she has observed that the Permanent Building Committee approves all expenses at their televised meetings. Mr. Murphy felt it would be best to have the NRC board continue to approve all expenses or perhaps the NRC chair can sign the voucher if an immediate payment is needed. The NRC concluded that they will continue to use the current method of approval.

Fuller Brook Park Preservation Construction Project and Additional Tree Removals

Mr. Schmitt and Ms. Bowser provided a brief update on the status of the project and stated that construction work continues in segment 1 and is currently focused on the dredging and restoration of Caroline Brook, installation of the helical piles for the new boardwalks and the installation of the two bio-retention areas in the segment of the park between Abbott and Caroline Street. The Fuller Brook Committee recently met and discussed the need for educational signage for the two bio-retention areas and the new wet meadow and that Horsley and Witten will be asked to propose sign content and lay-out, which will need to be reviewed by both the NRC and the Design Review Board. The Committee also discussed how to best address the park's benches that may not survive temporary removal and resetting and there was agreement that any bench replacement costs would be funded through the project's contingency budget. The project's new website is functional and weekly updates are being sent to the project's email distribution list and posted on the Town website. Mr. Schmitt stated that approximately 20 additional trees needed to be removed along the brook's bank between Abbott Street and Forest Street that had not been previously identified on the project site plans. Ms. Gross, Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Warren from the DPW met on-site and reviewed all additional trees to be removed. The NRC agreed that if there are additional park tree removals needed in the future, that Ms. Gross, Mr. Warren and Mr. Schmitt will review/approve changes in the plans and also ensure that the Wetlands Protection Committee is aware of any changes in a wetland resource area. Ms. Gross confirmed that the removal of all additional trees will be paid for by the project's construction contractor.

Wellesley College Cheever House Trail Connection

The NRC briefly reviewed an email from the Trails Committee with background information on potential changes to the Wellesley College Cheever House public trail access. Wellesley College is currently in the process of selling this property located at 828 Washington Street, which presents a problem for the Sudbury Aqueduct Path and trail system connection through this property since there is no other possible alternative route to access the aqueduct west of the Waban Arches. The Trails Committee has no formal agreement with Wellesley College for a

public trail through the Cheever House property, which is the same route used by MWRA to maintain their aqueduct land and it appears that the MWRA does not have any written agreement with Wellesley College either, but they are still searching their records. The Trails Committee would like to continue to have access to Washington Street to connect to the MWRA aqueduct in Natick and they submitted a map to the NRC that identified possible trail routes that would minimize the impact on the sale of the property and requested the NRC's guidance as to the best way to approach Wellesley College about securing a trail easement for one of the options. The NRC indicated that the best approach may be to work with the new owner to secure a conservation restriction providing public access under the Natural Resources Protection Development Zoning Bylaw.

Update 135 Great Plain Avenue Development/Open Space Parcel

The closing on the purchase of this 12 acre parcel to Northland Development Corp. has not yet occurred and no plans have been submitted to the Planning Board. The property contains a portion of Fuller Brook as well as a man-made pond and wetland resources areas and floodplain and abuts the Sudbury Aqueduct to the south and NRC conservation land to the north. Once Northland is confirmed as the property's new owner, the NRC will schedule a meeting with them to discuss the NRC's interest in protecting the back portion of this parcel with an easement or restriction (not outright acquisition) that would connect NRC conservation land with the Sudbury Aqueduct, which could be negotiated with the new owner with leverage under the Natural Resources Protection Development Zoning Bylaw.

Review and Approval of NRC November 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to approve the November 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes as revised.

Adjournment

After a motion was made and seconded, the NRC voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Hartke Bowser

Janet Hartke Bowser